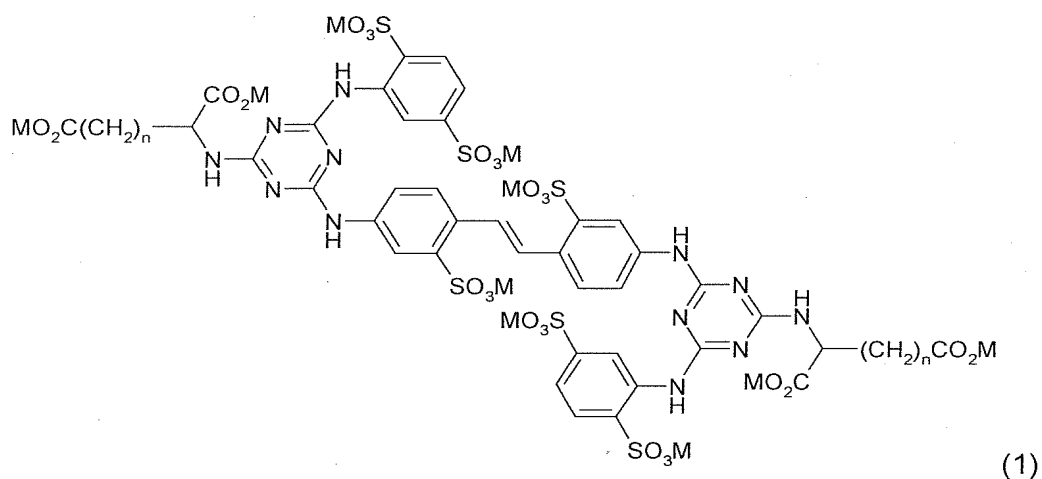


Amendments to the Claims

1. (previously presented) A storage-stable aqueous solution comprising at least one optical brightener of formula (1)



wherein

M is hydrogen, an alkali metal cation, ammonium, or ammonium which is mono-, di- or trisubstituted by a C₂-C₃-hydroxyalkyl radical, and

n is from 1 to 4,

wherein the amount of the at least one optical brightener is higher than 0.214 mol/kg and no solubilizing agent is contained in the solution.

2. (previously presented) A storage-stable aqueous solution according to claim 1

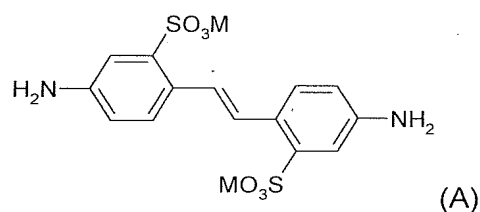
wherein

M is hydrogen or a sodium cation, and

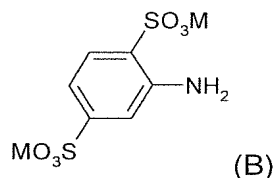
n is 1 or 2.

3. (previously presented) A storage-stable aqueous solution according to claim 1 wherein the concentration of the at least one optical brightener is from 0.215 mol/kg to 0.350 mol/kg.
4. (previously presented) A storage-stable aqueous solution according to claim 3 wherein the concentration of the at least one optical brightener is from 0.250 mol/kg to 0.340 mol/kg.
5. (currently amended) A storage-stable aqueous solution according to Claim 1 further comprising one or more compounds selected from the group consisting of inorganic salts, carriers, and antifreezes, ~~preservatives or complexing agents~~.
6. (previously presented) A process for preparing a storage-stable aqueous solution according to Claim 1 comprising the steps of preparing the at least one optical brightener of formula (1) by reacting a cyanuric halide with

- a) a diamine of formula (A)

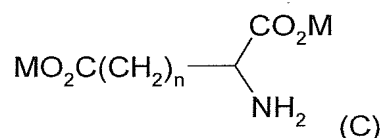


- b) an amine of formula (B)



and

c) an amine of formula (C)



to form a reaction solution,

and wherein at least 50 %by weight, of the alkali metal or amine salt generated as a by-product by the reactions between the diamine of formula a), the amine of formula b) and the amine of formula c) and the cyanuric halide is removed from the reaction solution.

7. (previously presented) The process according to claim 6 wherein the removal of the alkali metal or amine salt is done by ultrafiltration or membrane filtration of the reaction solution or by isolating the optical brightener and then redissolving the reaction solution.
8. (previously presented) The process according to claim 7 wherein the removal is done by membrane filtration.
9. (previously presented) A process for brightening of paper or cellulosic substrate containing a white pigment comprising the step of adding the storage stable aqueous solution of the optical brightener according to Claim 1 in a concentration of 0.05 to 0.5 % by weight of the white pigment to the paper or cellulosic substrate during production thereof.
10. (previously presented) A process according to claim 9 for brightening paper in a pigmented coating composition after sheet formation comprising the step of

adding to the pigmented coating composition the storage-stable aqueous solution of Claim 1.

11. (previously presented) The process according to Claim 6 wherein at least 80% by weight, of the alkali metal or amine salt generated as a by-product by the reactions between the diamine of formula a), the amine of formula b) and the amine of formula c) and the cyanuric halide is removed from the reaction solution.
12. (cancelled)
13. (cancelled)
14. (cancelled)